



CALPEEK

CALIFORNIA POLITICAL WEEK

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CALIF. INITIATIVE UPDATE: PLAN TO EXTEND TERM LIMITS FOR LEGISLATORS NEARING QUALIFICATION.

Editor's note: By the time Calpeek is back from vacation in two weeks, this proposal to extend term limits for members of the CA State Assembly and CA State Senate will almost be ready for turn in. Here's our first report & analysis about this controversial initiative...

...There's heavy money from business, labor, consumer groups and from senior citizen organizations to qualify a constitutional amendment which will give otherwise *termed out* legislators additional time – if they can collect the required number of signatures. This initiative's official title is **Legislative Term Limits. Local Voter Petitions.** The official committee name is *Citizens Right to Petition*. The sponsor is Howard Owens of the CA Congress of Seniors, while the chair is Louis Meunier of the CA Retailers Assn. Nielsen Merksamer is handling the legal details, while Santa Monica-based Progressive Campaigns is handling the petition drive. As of Calpeek's deadline, some 850,000 signatures had been collected – which is about 180,000 more than required. But to play safe, the sponsors will go for 1.1 million signatures. Sources say the committee will turn in these signatures in 2-3 weeks and most sources expect this initiative to qualify for the Mar. 5, 2002 primary ballot...

...The current term limit law was approved by voters in 1990. Since that time there has been a complete turnover in members of both houses of the legislature. The results have been a mixed bag. Lots of fresh, new faces – but with a gradual loss of what's known as institutional memory. In other words, the only people who know to what's going on in the Capitol are the professional staffs and lobbyists...

...If approved by voters, the term limit extension would begin in the 2004 election cycle. It allows State Senators one additional 4-year term (for a total of 12 years); while Assemblymembers could get two additional 2-year terms (10 years) – IF they collect 20% of all the votes cast in the last election for their position – and in a 90-day time period. This is easier said than done. Also the candidate must be a sitting legislator seeking reelection. In other words, if this initiative

is approved, former Assemblyman Willie Brown can't use this measure for a return ticket to Sacto...

...But Given the \$3,000 per contribution limits on legislative fundraising (Prop. 34), the 90-day time frame and the intensive door-to-door nature of the signature collecting, sources think only *high profile legislators* with big warchests and solid grass roots political organizations will be able to pull this off. In other words, it won't be a slam dunk...

...FYI: DC-based U.S. Term Limits will be leading the charge against this initiative. They've already titled this measure, "the SCAM initiative." **SCAM** – Sacramento CAreerist Mentality. Unlike our analysis, U.S. Term Limits sources think incumbents would be able to raise the necessary funds and get the signatures. Stay tuned...

CALPEEK WILL BE ON VACATION FOR NEXT 2 WEEKS

It's time for a little R&R and Calpeek will be on vacation for the last week in August and the first week in September. We'll be back at work Sept. 10th and your next issue of Calpeek will be dated Sept. 17th...

CAMPAIGN 2002: AS LABOR DAY APPROACHES, THE CALIF. GOP IS STILL SEARCHING FOR CANDIDATES.

Editor's note: Labor Day is the traditional time for both GOP and Demo statewide candidates to kick off their campaigns. But this year it's different – and not just because of Calif.'s early Mar. 5th primary. Here's our update & analysis...

...The *Calif. Republican Party* really is in bad shape. And this isn't some secret known only to political insiders and analysts. The last three election cycles dating back to 1996 have been disasters for the CA GOP. In 1998, Republicans were able to hold the two statewide offices they already controlled (SOS and Insurance Commissioner), but were unable to beat Demos for the open seats – including the top job of governor where Gray Davis(D) routed Republican Dan Lungren. And by the July 10, 2000, Sec. of State Bill Jones was the only GOPer in Statewide office, thanks to the

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self-inflicted wounds of former Insurance Comm. Chuck Quackenbush, who was forced to resign under a cloud...

...As Labor Day approaches, the CRP is embroiled in yet another internal brouhaha over reforms. But that's really a minor distraction compared to the fact there are no GOP candidates for 3 statewide offices: Attorney General, CA State Treasurer and CA Insurance Commissioner. And while it's true there are 3 very capable candidates (SOS Bill Jones, businessman Bill Simon and former L.A. Mayor Dick Riordan) seeking to oust Gov. Gray Davis, odds of that happening *at this point* seem remote...

...There are 3 reasons why Davis seems well positioned to win a second term. 1) *History* sides with incumbents who usually win a 2nd term. 2) He's got a *monster warchest* of \$30 million-plus and growing (he told a doubting press that he might need a huge warchest just in case he had to face a self-funding GOP millionaire – Davis was right). And 3) He's the *luckiest politician* in the U.S. In the midst of one of Calif.'s worst emergencies, the lights are still on and Calif. is building enough new power plants so that by this time next year the State AND Davis should be in much better shape. But let's not forget to give some credit here to Pres. George W. Bush. At a time when Gov. Davis was in a *popularity slump*, it was Pres. Bush who agreed to meet with him to discuss Calif.'s energy troubles. And after that meeting it was Davis who saw his numbers *go upward*. In fact, Davis' handling of the State's energy crisis probably rates a **B**. He could have gotten an **A** had he acted sooner and had his administration not been asleep regarding conflicts by consultants hired to work on the energy crisis...

...Sources say recent private polls still show some rocky spots for Davis (his job performance numbers aren't much better than earlier this Spring), but the Davis team seems confident that going into the 2002 election the governor's numbers will improve. The campaign already had an unofficial kick off on Aug. 11th with Davis picking up a whole string of endorsements from key law enforcement groups...

...FYI: the law enforcement backing is critical for Davis because it helps support his *right flank*. Line cops, such as ALADS, PORAC, COPS, LAPPL, CPOA and SCALE are probably more GOP than Demo, but the organizations above endorsed Davis for 3 basic reasons: Davis has enforced the death penalty law; he signed a binding arbitration bill; and he's attempting to keep his no parole policy for intentional murderers, the Rosenkrantz case notwithstanding. Stay tuned...

THE CONDIT WATCH: WILL CONDIT CONSULTANT RICHIE ROSS BE ABLE SAVE THE CONGRESSMAN??

Editor's note: As Calpeek hit deadline, U.S. Rep. Gary Condit (D-Ceres) was preparing to go on ABC-TV's *Prime-time* with reporter Connie Chung. And at about this same time, some 200,000 18th CD voters were getting a mailer from the embattled congressman. These are the first steps in an effort to save Condit's damaged political career, because as reported in **Calpeek** two weeks before anyone else, Condit will seek reelection next year. The consultant who is orchestrating this "rehab" campaign is Sacto-based Richie Ross. Can he pull this off? Here's our analysis & commentary...

...The Aug. 23rd Condit/Chung interview ought to be a ratings champ. By Friday, Aug. 24th the spinning will begin anew and we may have a better idea from opinion molders as to whether Condit was a *winner* or *loser*. It's really an uphill road for Condit and Ross knows this. In terms of *polling*, pollsters will be in the field by Friday morning. Results may be ready by Monday, Aug. 27th...

...The hype all week long prior to the interview on cable & radio talk shows was non-stop. And there was all kinds of speculation. But the bottomline as far as most pundits are concerned is that Condit had better answer every question put to him with total candor; he must apologize for his behavior (and ask for forgiveness); and most importantly, he must convince voters that he had absolutely nothing to do with Chandra Levy's disappearance. If he fails in any of these areas, he's *political toast*...

...Having said that, there is probably *nothing* that Condit can say which will satisfy the Levy family...

...And it's not only the Levy family which Condit has to satisfy. Remember: the Fresno & Modesto BEE on Aug. 5th called on Condit to resign. And it was the Fresno BEE which nailed Condit on two points: 1) Condit "had his congressional staff lie for him about his relationship with Chandra Levy;" and 2) "Condit chose to protect his political career rather than help find a woman he claimed to be a friend." Condit called the editorials "unfair."...

...Now to Ross. He is one of the most respected Demo consultants in Calif., but he does have his share of critics. He's got a large stable campaign clients and a fairly good won/loss record as a consultant. When he's on target with his message, his clients are tough to beat. But some sources rate the odds of saving Condit at no better than 3 on a scale of 10. It's the biggest challenge Ross has faced as a cam-

paigned consultant. Initially, much will depend on how Condit handles the Chung interview and in that respect, it is out of Ross's hands. And all this assumes that Condit's Demo enemies in the Central Valley won't try to recruit a *deep pocketed Demo* to challenge Condit in the primary. **Calpeek** is hearing rumors along those lines because Condit has Demo enemies. Stay tuned...

FORMER CALIF. GOP CHAIR MCGRAW AT CENTER OF CURRENT FIGHT OVER WHO CONTROLS THE PARTY.

Editor's note: In Part IV of **Calpeek's** continuing series of updates about the ongoing battle over reforming the Calif. Republican Party (CRP), we'll focus this week on the former chairman – because if there's one thing both sides in this battle over reform have in common it's that John McGraw was not a very good CRP chairman. Here's our analysis & commentary...

...The reform movement got its start when current CRP leader Shawn Steel was campaigning against Brooks Firestone for CRP chairman in February. Both candidates had pledged to reform and professionalize the party. When Steel was elected, he appointed Pres. George W. Bush's key Calif. operative – businessman Gerald Parsky to oversee a new Reform & Revision Commission. This commission, with only 4 opposed, recently approved a by-laws reform (known as the Parsky Plan), which essentially takes power away from the chair and gives it to a chief operating officer (COO). Steel says Parsky's plan goes too far and will hurt the CRP. Parsky and his allies disagree and say this reform is needed to prevent the CRP from repeating past mistakes – a reference to McGraw. The Parsky Reform Plan will be debated at the CRP's Sept. 14-16 fall convention in L.A...

...Now to McGraw. What did he do which has both sides in agreement? Let's start with his selection of Jon Fleischman as the CRP's executive director, now called the COO. No one doubts Fleischman had political skills, but sources believe McGraw selected Fleischman based more on his conservative ideology than on his ability to run the party. FYI: the CRP issued a confidential Management Review in October of 1999. One of the conclusions: Fleischman didn't have the necessary management skills or experience to be an effective ED. The current COO, Ryan Erwin, was picked after a nationwide executive search – at the request of Parsky and agreed to by Steel...

...And **Calpeek** sources say McGraw had infrequent meetings with the CRP's Board of Directors – leading to some high profile mistakes. One of those blunders came prior to the March 2000 Calif. primary. The CRP had gone on record in *opposing Prop. 26* – to allow local school bonds to

be passed with a 50% vote (vs. a 2/3rds vote). However, the CRP's slate sold space to YES on 26 for \$50,000. When this was discovered, all hell broke out and the CRP was forced to return the \$50,000 to the YES on 26 campaign. However, it was too late to remove YES on 26 from the slate mailing. Uppps...

...Another more serious blunder occurred after the 2000 primary when McGraw authorized the use of \$10,000 in CRP funds to be used to partially fund a lawsuit to unseat 3 GOP 2000 primary State Assembly winners (Dauscher, Harman & Yates). These three moderates had won in OPEN primaries, but when the court tossed out Calif.'s Open Primary Law, conservatives challenged these three in court. It cost Dauscher & Co. about \$50,000 each to defend themselves. Huge mistake by the CRP – most sources now agree...

...How did these things happen? Under the current by-laws, the CRP chair has almost unlimited power, with very few checks & balances. That's one reason why the pro-Parsky forces want these changes: to provide some checks on the chair's unlimited power. But unlimited power has been used by some past chairs (at CRP conventions) to table or kill some very controversial proposals which could have really ripped the CRP to pieces. So power cuts both ways...

...FYI: The Sacto BEE's Daniel Weintraub's Aug. 21st column about this current battle is well worth reading. Stay tuned...

CALPEEK'S CALENDAR OF POLITICAL EVENTS

Sept. 11	Special election – L.A. City 4 th Council Dist.
Sept. 12-15	League of Calif. Cities – annual convention, Sacramento Convention Center, Sacramento.
Sept. 14-16	CA Republican Party convention, LAX Marriott Hotel.
Sept. 28-29	CA Political Attorneys Assn. convention, Monterey.
Oct. 9-12	Regional Council of Rural Counties, annual conference, Tenaya Lodge, Mariposa Co.
Oct. 14	Last day for Gov. Davis to sign bills.
Oct. 29	Calif. candidate declaration of intent for 2002.
Nov. 6	S.F. Municipal Election.
Nov. 9-12	IAPC 34 th World Conference, Malta.
Dec. 4-8	Nat'l League of Cities convention, Atlanta.
Dec. 11	Special election – L.A. City 2 nd Council Dist.

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DOG DAYS OF SUMMER: POLITICAL SHORT TAKES.

Editor's note: Here are a few items, political & otherwise, worth noting...

■ ***Full Metal Jacket*** – As Calpeek hit deadline the status of two high profile guns bills (AB 35 by Kevin Shelley and SB 52 by Jack Scott) were still up in the air. Both bills deal with *handgun acquisition licensing* – a very controversial issue and one which Gov. Gray Davis(D) won't go near unless the CA State Sheriffs and line cop groups give their OK. In an effort to move Davis, handgun control advocates got the L.A. Times to editorialize about these bills. The editorial trashed Davis for his unwillingness to say if he'll sign these bills (*A Gunshy Governor* was the title of the editorial). The big problem for Davis is that Scott (and to some degree Shelley) have become *lightning rods* for the gun lobby. In other words, even if the cops sign off on AB 35 or SB 52, there's still a chance the NRA may go to the ballot with a referendum. Politically, it's a no win situation for Davis because the gun lobby probably has 600,000 members in Calif. Multiply that by a factor of 3 and it spells trouble in 2002...

■ ***'Please Debate Me,' Says Jones*** – Sec. of State Bill Jones wants his two GOP rivals for governor to debate him at the upcoming CRP convention, Sept. 14-16 at the LAX Marriott Hotel. It would take the edge off the CRP's current internal brouhaha over reforming the party's by-laws, but it's doubtful whether either former L.A. Mayor Dick Riordan or L.A. businessman Bill Simon would accept the challenge for 2 reasons: 1) it would give Jones some badly needed exposure with base GOP voters; and 2) sources say Jones might cream either Riordan or Simon at this point – in other words, neither Riordan nor Simon is ready for prime time. FYI: GOP Assemblyman Tony Strickland of Camarillo has endorsed Simon. Strickland is chair of the Assembly GOP Caucus and a number of conservative groups had been running a *Draft Strickland for Governor* campaign....

■ ***Another Special Election in L.A.*** – The L.A. City Council has set Dec. 11th for a special election to fill the expected departure of Joel Wachs in the 2nd District. Wachs has announced he will resign his seat Oct. 1st. FYI: council candidate Wendy Greuel has hired the team of John Shallman, Julie Buckner, Susan Burnside and Brian Rix & Pat Bradford. It's just about the same team which is now doing Tom LaBonge's campaign in the other special election in the 4th District – set for Sept. 11th...

■ ***L.A. Utility Tax Initiative*** – GOP BOE member Dean Andal and the Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Assn. will

file an initiative with the L.A. City Clerk's office to cut the current L.A. City Utility User Tax in half. Andal and the HJTA say they've given the city enough time to respond to calls for cuts in the tax, with no response. L.A. City taxpayers are hit for LADWP (electricity, but not on water), natural gas, phone and cellular service...

■ ***Santa Monica Referendum*** – Backers of a referendum to repeal Santa Monica's new law requiring a **\$12.25 per hour** minimum wage turned in some 9,000 signatures to the city clerk's office on Aug. 20th. 6,000 valid signatures are needed qualify for either the March or November 2002 ballot. The group backing the referendum is called Santa Monicans Fighting Against Irresponsible Regulation(FAIR). About 40 hotels and restaurants in Santa Monica are impacted – unless they're already unionized. Union hotels are exempt. The latest story about this controversial issue was in Steve Lopez's Points West column in the L.A. Times. One thing Lopez got wrong: FAIR's media spin MD Sheri Annis was **not** connected to the Willie Horton ads of 1988 – she was still in college. FYI: the L.A.-based Dolphin Group is handling campaign organizing for FAIR, while Nat'l Petition Mgt. of Roseville handled the signature drive. Stay tuned...

CALPEEK's NEW JOBS AND PERSONNEL NOTICES.

Editor's note: Here are some items to mark down in your notebook...

● The former leader of the Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Assn., consultant Joel Fox, has been hired as director of policy & research by the exploratory campaign for GOP gubernatorial hopeful Dick Riordan...

● Mark A. Waronek has been hired as an AE by L.A.-based Cerrell Associates, Inc. He'll work in the firm's local govt. affairs unit...

● L.A.-based campaign firm of The Robert Group has hired Bevan Dufty as a Sr. VP in the firm's San Francisco office and Ginny-Marie Case as an associate in the L.A. office. Dufty was S.F.'s director of Neighborhood Services for the past 5 years...

● Douglas P. Haubert has joined the law offices of Burke, Williams & Sorensen. He'll work in the firm's Orange Co. office...

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